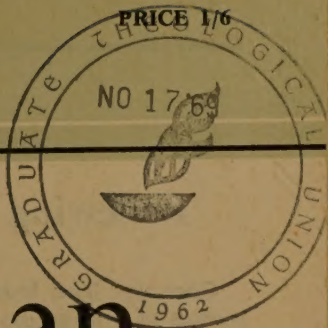


VOLUME 10

NUMBER 10

PRICE 1/6



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Christian Order

Summary of Contents for October 1969

THE FORMATION OF A CHRISTIAN

John Murray, S.J.

TWO LETTERS TO SUMPSIMUS

MEANINGLESS COMPARISON

The Editor

OUR SYSTEM OF TAXATION

J. M. Jackson

WANTED: A LONG HAUL

Paul Crane, S.J.

IS PREACHING NECESSARY?

Francis Fenn, S.J.

THE NAKED APE MYTH

E. L. Way

Renewing That Subscription

Once you have burrowed your way into the subscription records of a magazine like *Christian Order*, it takes no time at all to realize that renewals are everything.

There are, I suppose, two reasons for this. In the first place, *Christian Order*, of its very nature, is not the sort of publication that can increase its circulation by leaps and bounds. *Private Eye* has had a shorter life than *Christian Order*, yet its weekly circulation is, I believe, 50,000. *Christian Order* is not yet 5,000. The reason for the difference is, I imagine, fairly obvious.

Again, *Christian Order* is not interested in a changing readership; the sort of situation represented by a regular and heavy fall off in subscriptions being just about compensated for by an inflow of new subscribers on a temporary basis each year. I cannot see that much good is done that way.

The ideal situation from the point of view of *Christian Order* is represented by a high renewal rate combined with a steady intake of new subscribers each year. This is what we want and I am sure you will agree that it is a sensible objective. You will help us attain it if you are so kind as to renew, by return of post if possible, when you receive a letter from me to the effect that your subscription is now due. It would be a very real kindness if you would do this.

With very many thanks,
Paul Crane, S.J.

Contents

Page

578 TOO MUCH NOT TOO LITTLE
The Editor

581 TWO LETTERS TO SUMPSIMUS

597 IS PREACHING NECESSARY?
Francis Fenn, S.J.

602 MEANINGLESS COMPARISON
The Editor

611 THE NAKED APE MYTH
E. L. Way

616 A CHANGING CHURCH IN A
CHANGING WORLD
John Murray, S.J.

624 OUR SYSTEM OF TAXATION
(i) Objectives
J. M. Jackson

631 ANY QUESTIONS?
William Lawson, S.J.

636 BOOK REVIEWS
Paul Crane, S.J.

CHRISTIAN ORDER is a monthly magazine devoted to the promulgation of Catholic Social Teaching and incisive comment on current affairs in Church and State; at home and abroad; in the political, social and industrial fields.

It is published by Father Paul Crane, S.J., from 65, Belgrave Road, London, S.W.1. This is the sole postal address to which all communications concerning *Christian Order* should be sent.

Christian Order is obtainable only by subscription and from this address. In the case of those desiring more than one copy, these are obtainable at the subscription rate and should be paid for in advance.

The annual subscription to *Christian Order* is £1 in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland; \$3.00 in the United States, Canada and Australia; elsewhere, according to the approximate sterling rate of exchange, in the currency of the country concerned or any convenient currency.

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Christian Order

EDITED BY

Paul Crane SJ

VOLUME 10

OCTOBER 1969

NUMBER 10

Too Much not too Little

THE EDITOR

IT has been well said that the citizen in contemporary Britain is frustrated not because he is denied participation in government, but because there is altogether too much of it in his regard.

The cure for his present discontent is not to grant him vague and tenuous association at the periphery with the centralized and, therefore, necessarily impersonal decisions that government takes with regard to his life. There is no sense in this kind of participatory democracy, which appears to coincide with that advocated in over-excited fashion by Anthony Wedgwood Benn. The form of participation Benn seeks is meaningless precisely because it presupposes centralized and, therefore, impersonal decision-making which, of its very nature, makes participation an impossibility; in fact, a contradiction in terms. For participation cannot be except on a personal basis and how can this exist under a system of increasingly centralised control over the citizen's life which must, of its very nature, be impersonal; allowing the citizen, at the most, no more than a distant glance at what is being done in his regard. Whatever this may be it is not participation. To talk excitedly as if it were is merely to play games. Participation, as Wedgwood Benn and others appear to under-

stand it, is no more than a fancy name for the kind of conformism rightly seen as essential to the success of any system of centralized "democratic" planning. This rests on the belief that government knows best, that the citizen must be constantly exhorted to agree that it does and that he must give evidence of the agreement through some sort of positive yet peripheral association with the government's plans. Participation is the new name for this peripheral conformism. It is a device for maintaining increasingly centralized government control on a supposedly democratic basis. In reality, it disguises the fact that the citizen is steadily being left with less and less control over the innumerable government decisions that increasingly affect his life.

What the citizen needs at the moment is not more government, but less. If he is to be associated more closely with the decisions that affect his life — and this after all is what democracy means — the thing to do is to take as many of them as possible out of government hands and put them into his own. The remedy for his growing frustration is not the futility of peripheral association with increasingly centralized control, but the decentralization of control itself. This, of course, is the very last thing that Mr. Wilson and his associates — to say nothing of the self-sufficient technocrats who form today's burgeoning meritocracy — would ever be prepared to consider. They have fallen long since into the circular trap which beckons state monopolists everywhere. They complicate life with their centralized plans, then use the complications they have manufactured as an excuse for further centralized planning. It was Mussolini who said in the thirties that the complexities of economic life made centralized planning essential. The ranks of the Labour Party are filled with undersized images of the Fascist dictator; and the main trouble with the Conservatives at the moment is that they are suffering from the same disease. Neither Party is capable as yet of realising that the best thing for government to do today — the best remedy for civic discontent — is to get out to the greatest extent possible from the ordinary citizen's affairs. Neither Party will consider this

at the moment because each is suffering from the same delusion, which is that of its own supposed indispensability. At the very time when they should be thinking of how best to leave the citizen in increased possession of his own life, members of both Parties are dreaming up new plans for its further management by government. They still do not see that the main thing they have to aim at nowadays is to leave the citizen alone.

Not negatively, but positively, through giving back to the citizen an increasingly greater share in the management of those things that intimately concern him. They might begin with the most intimate thing of all which is the family and build outwardly from there; removing from parenthood the function of mere maintenance-machine to which it has been degraded and striving once more by all possible means to make mother and father fully responsible for themselves and for their children. Restoration can only begin at this point. As yet, there is no sign that any responsible politician has a mind to set this process in motion or is even aware that it needs doing. What frightens me most is the seemingly total blindness of all of them — Conservative as well as Labour — in this regard.

The author of this brilliantly written article is not attacking the introduction of the vernacular in the Mass. He is watching it with interest and unease.

(The second letter is reprinted, by kind permission of the Editor, from a former issue of *The Clergy Review*.)

Two Letters to Sumpsimus

May, 1969

My dear Sumpsimus,

Your letter has just reached me, and I hasten to reply. I am naturally grateful that you should want a copy of the letter which I wrote to you in August, 1966. You must not apologise for having lost the original; that, after all, is the invariable fate of letters in our family. They come and they go: who knows how or where or whither. Your uncle, Mumpsimus, I can assure you, takes comfort from your confession that the family failing is equally marked in you, his nephew. By a fortunate chance, while trying to clear up my desk last week I discovered a copy. Here it is for you.

You ask me if I have had, as they say, second thoughts since I wrote to you three years ago, deploring the virtual disappearance of the Latin Mass from so many of our churches. My reply is that I see no reason to make any essential changes in my first letter. The business has gone forward very much as I expected. "I must admit", wrote a friend to me nearly two years ago, "that I was not really expecting the replacement of the altar by the Holy Table, nor that, following the Elizabethan statutes, this must be moved well clear of the east wall; nor did I imagine that the Minister would be instructed to face the people". Well, as a matter of fact, I did; but I thought it would take a bit longer to emerge than it has. My guess was ten years, or thereabouts. I did not foresee the pace of the change.

Three years ago I should have been surprised to hear of a

vernacular Mass, recently witnessed by a friend in North America. A peculiarly banal children's story about a rabbit was substituted for the gospel, and the communicants approached the Holy Table chorusing "When the saints come marching in". But, I admit, it is difficult to slither with dignity. I admit, too, that these antics are extreme specimens, in all probability, of transatlantic barbarism; but at the same time the argument that what happens in America is central rather than peripheral is worth consideration. The prevailing wind in England today is from the West.

I have had two other surprises; one unpleasant, the other pleasant. I certainly never expected the voracious enthusiasm with which some of your more advanced clerical friends have chosen the more foolish metrical translations to replace some of the great Latin hymns. For Aquinas was a very great poet; and Thomas of Celano's *Dies Irae* is one of the great achievements of European literature. Admittedly, great poetry is untranslatable; but it was a surprise to witness presumably educated men choosing vernacular versions whose literary merit was considerably below that of Old Mother Hubbard or Three Blind Mice.

The second surprise was pleasant. Who would have expected the rapid growth in three short and confused years of the Latin Mass Society? I certainly did not. Under every disadvantage, a purely lay organization, without money, patronage or publicity, a mere mustard seed in the vernacular undergrowth, it has taken root and begun to spread abroad its branches. If you doubt its impact, consider the quality of the antagonism with which it has been met. It has come to stay.

You ask me about the future? I am neither a prophet nor the son of a prophet, and I am by temperament a pessimist. Yet I doubt the truth of the confident assertion that Latin is doomed. For this scepticism I have a number of reasons, three of which you may care to consider.

To begin with, I am convinced that the attack on Latin depends on a false psychology of prayer. If this is so, it follows that the attack must, sooner or later, come to a halt,

and then break down. How long this will take I do not know. Secondly, the attack depends not so much on a clearly articulated intellectual case as on a mood. At the moment this mood is still strong; but nothing is more transient than a mood. The intellectual wind changes and suddenly the whole human landscape changes with it. Only by a strong exercise of intelligence and memory can one recapture what had seemed so permanent. Hence the old truth that the cult of the contemporaneous is in the event the cult of yesterday. The pursuit of modernity is the preoccupation of the middle-aged.

Thirdly, the attack on the Latin Mass depends on a foolish misconception of the Past — “dead and gone”, they tell us, “outdated”, “irrelevant”. How the clichés pile up! In fact the Past is always present, and its dead, whether we are conscious of them or not, are always present. What chance have the little iconoclasts of today in their revolt against it? After all they cannot shut the eyes or stop the ears of Catholics. Somewhere about the year A.D. 200, according to Tertullian, the Latin Mass had already reached this island, and it has never been totally expelled. Consider the churches built for it, the poetry which it has inspired, the music which has been written for it. You cannot destroy all this completely, abolish its memory or shut it up in museums or concert halls. Sooner or later beauty and civilisation will creep back. It is just possible that they may come with a rush; and with them will come the Latin Mass.

Stat et stabit, manet et manebit: spectator orbis

Do you remember the story of the rich vulgarian who was being shown round one of the great temples of the East? “That lamp”, said his guide, “which you see burning there has never been allowed to go out for a thousand years”. “Poof!”, said the rich vulgarian, “well, I guess it’s out now”. All over England the lamps have been going out; but they will, I think, be relit; and in our own time.

Your affectionate uncle,
Mumpsimus.

August, 1966.

My dear Sumpsimus,

It was good of you to send to your not yet decrepit uncle Mumpsimus that parcel of books, articles and pamphlets which urged the virtues of the new vernacular Mass, and deplored either directly or by implication the traditional Mass in the Latin tongue. I was grateful, too, for your covering letter. You, it was clear, were already dedicated to the cause of your new vernacular, but you were courteously prepared to ask for and even to consider my opinion. There was no suggestion that I was to be, as I lately overheard a brash young man put it, "dragged screaming into the twentieth century" — a century of which I have now had, incidentally, a very considerable experience, and of which, I think, I have taken the measure: hence the implied compliment of the pseudonym by which I address you. For you remember, I expect, the old story (concocted, I think, by Wolsey's man, Richard Pace) of the conservative if insufficiently learned monk whose missal contained the misprint, with which he had always scrupulously complied, *quod ore mumpsimus*. When corrected by a forward-looking young monk, he retorted: "You may keep your new *sumpsimus*: I shall stick to my old *mumpsimus*."

Let me, then, tackle first the charge of elderly conservatism. To this I would reply that I am indeed, in all probability, a fair representative of that not inconsiderable number of converts who have found themselves on the periphery of the Church after coming to the conviction that without it civilization could not stand. Without Morality, no Tragedy; without Manners, no Comedy; without both, no Satire; only a sneer. To our dismay, we were compelled to call in the next world in order to redress the balance of that world which, up till then, had been our only concern. And there stood the Church, intensely, even horribly, human; and yet alone among human institutions not subject to the sentence of mortality. Like Macaulay, we looked for an answer; and, unlike Macaulay, we were not satisfied with

his answer. And so we went, as did certain greater and better men before us, by way of the Three Taverns towards Rome. Today we try to look at the Church and the things of the Church, not in terms of a decade but in terms of close on twenty turbulent centuries; this is not conservatism; it is an appreciation, however imperfect, of reality.

Let me, too, clear away another possible misconception. Some liturgical experiment in the use of the vernacular may very well, for all I know, be justifiable today: that is a point with which I am not concerned. Sweeping change, however, is a very different thing from experiment. Today in the England of Elizabeth II it is for many Catholics almost as difficult to find a Latin Mass at which to assist as it was in the England of Elizabeth I: this is not development but a landslide. And no true radical (one who, presumably, is concerned with roots) cares for a landslide.

And now to my case. To begin with, I distrust some of your friends. They are forward-looking men, pioneers, men-in-advance-of-their-time. You know the type. Have you sufficiently considered, my dear Sumpsimus, the undoubted fact that what is a "scandal to all right-thinking" men in one generation generally becomes to all right-thinking men two generations later, a thing of beauty carelessly tossed on to the rubbish heap, or with difficulty saved from dull stupidity or malevolent philistinism. And notice, these reformers are not stupid men. On the contrary, they are highly intelligent. It is this which makes their folly at once fascinating and destructive. You doubt me? Very well, let us have a look.

I need not delay over Cardinal Bembo. He, if I remember rightly, wanted to improve *Pater Noster qui es in coelis* into a version which, in the interests of what the Renaissance supposed to be pure Latinity, invoked Jupiter on Olympus. He was not alone in his mad logic. Do you remember Cocksure Tom Macaulay's horror at reading for the first time the *Gloria in Excelsis*? A horror so extreme that it betrayed him into a false concord. Again, take Tobias Smollett. He was an acute, sensitive, widely travelled man. Yet he looked at York Minster with despairing revulsion and urged that it

should speedily be replaced by a "neat Grecian room". And it was Washington Irving, wasn't it, who groaned at the "barbarous ornament" of Westminster Abbey. Horace Walpole was as civilised a man as you could wish to meet; yet he was sincerely convinced that "Dante was but a Methodist parson in Bedlam, and Spenser John Bunyan in rhyme". And then there was the Cambridge Camden Society. Consider the trail of ruin and devastation for which its members are responsible. All of them up-and-coming, highly intelligent, abreast-of-the-times young men. Nearly all of them subsequently stalked the corridors of power in Church and State in their own right. They came, they saw, they destroyed. One could stretch the catalogue of proposed or accomplished destruction for pages. *Oculos habent et non videbunt: aures habent et non audient*. When I consider that all these were, in their generation, intelligent, right-thinking men, I must confess that you and your friends have every claim to be considered men of strong nerves. For to the *Pater Noster*, the *Gloria in Excelsis*, York Minster, Westminster Abbey, the *Divine Comedy*, the poetry of Spenser, the prose of Bunyan and half the incomparable parish churches of England, you reformers propose to add the Latin Mass, the most beautiful thing in Europe. May I, with *malice prepense*, recommend to you as bedside reading the *Journal of William Dowsing*?

And now to my next point. Nowhere, so far as I am aware, is there any recognition among the English Catholics of the plain fact that the experiment of a vernacular liturgy in England has a long history behind it. And that history of a Serbonian Bog, "where armies whole have sunk", illustrates in considerable detail most of the problems which the introduction of a vernacular liturgy involves. Part of the explanation of this odd phenomenon is that the English Catholics have never troubled to study the religious history since 1559 of their own country. They remain either up to their necks in Boyne water or splashing in the engaging if muddy shallows of the seventeenth-century controversies between the regular and the secular clergy. In the meantime, the great

river of English religion has flowed forward unobserved. It is very odd; and it is rather depressing.

I do not propose, my dear Sumpsimus, to instruct you in the business; one cannot compress four centuries into one paragraph. I shall content myself with saying that you should explain to your friends that, if they wish to be taken seriously by me, they must have first read and pondered that admirable introduction to the subject, Addleshaw and Etchells: *The Architectural Setting of Anglican Worship* (Faber 1940). Is it unkind to remind you how you goggled at me when I ejaculated "Grantham"?

Here all that it is necessary to say is that, so far as the ordinary Englishman of the villages and market-towns of Tudor England was concerned, the Reformation came to him principally as the substitution of a vernacular liturgy for the Latin Mass; and this in a building constructed for the traditional rite. Inevitably the new liturgy was the work of academics, with a liberal dose of inspiration from Germany. And so it is today. Not, of course, that history repeats itself, though historical situations do so with a curious regularity. You have found as yet no Cranmer to do the job of translation. The new service has not been greeted by an armed rising, nor does one expect to see the corpse of Sir Arnold Lunn dangling from a church tower, with a Roman missal tied round his middle. At the same time, I could wish that you and your friends would read Cranmer's denunciation of the Catholic Rebels of 1549. You'll find it in Strype. Your arguments and, may I say, your irritation, almost exactly reproduce those of the Archbishop. Admittedly, he made great play with the new dogma of the Divine Right of Kings, while your friends prefer to appeal to the supposed sentiments of the twentieth-century democracy. Yet, after all, what is *vox populi, vox Dei* but either the old heresy of the Divine Right of Kings standing on its head, or our old friends the Tailors of Tooley Street, armed with a loudspeaker.

And what may we gather from the liturgical experiment in the vernacular by our English forefathers? Primarily this, uniformity is impossible. Acts of Parliament, energetic

Bishops, zealous magistrates, eloquent preachers, learned divines, all will in the event be powerless to overcome human nature. Choose, if you will, divine worship in the vernacular but you must pay the price; and the price, or part of it, is uniformity. A century and a half of a vernacular liturgy changed the "Dowry of Mary" into "the land of a hundred religions and one sauce", as the Neapolitan ambassador observed. You think, do you, that the Church of Rome can succeed where the Church of England failed, and that where the magic of Cranmer was insufficient the prose of *bien pensant* twentieth-century academics will do the trick? You exclaim, do you, "it can't happen to us"? And yet, my dear Sumpsimus, you lectured me on the dangers of "Triumphalism".

After 1559, when the Latin Mass ceased in England, several types of religious temperament which it had satisfied were slowly and inexorably driven apart. By the end of the seventeenth century the rift was unbridgeable. I say "temperament", not as supposing that theology had no part in the business. Of course not. Yet I believe that temperament played, in all probability, the decisive part. And the historians, I see, are beginning to say so too. High Church, Low Church, Broad Church, Arminian and Calvinist, Fifth Monarchy Man and Quaker, Conformist and Non-Conformist, temperamentally they were all there in the churches of medieval England, assisting, each after his own fashion and according to his own capacity, and to the measure of divine grace, in the Latin Mass. When that went, religious temperament had its way: there was nothing to contain it.

In particular was this true of the clergy. The Latin Mass exalted the priesthood and all but obliterated the priest. With every tone and gesture prescribed by rubric and dictated by custom, with his face hidden, and with his back shrouded in the chasuble, with his voice confined by the disciplined march of the immemorial Latin of the missal, the human individual personality and temperament of the priest were barely audible. In so far as it was humanly possible, the Mass was anonymous.

This anonymity ceases with the introduction of the vernacular. Now, however hard he may try, the priest's personality necessarily reverberates through the church. If you like that personality, it provides a serious distraction; if you dislike it, it provides a perhaps worse distraction. "No priest between my soul and God" was cry of the Reformers; and they promptly introduced the vernacular. "A good many of the young parsons have now got into a way of performing the service impressively. So-and-so has a little of it. I don't suppose the Catholic service could be performed impressively," wrote Hurrell Froude on the threshold of Queen Victoria's reign. He was right. It can't — in Latin.

A further point, the Germans, admittedly, are rarely at their ease unless moving in mass formation, but with the English it is otherwise. In particular, they respond to silence. Not for them the fire and the whirlwind: instead they react to the still, small voice. You can see it in their secular ceremonies; even when they employ noise — the drums and the bugles and the marching — it only emphasizes the silent, or all but silent, climax. It is not for nothing that the Quakers have shaped so much of English history, filling England with their good works and the *Dictionary of National Biography* with their honoured names. "Let all mortal flesh keep silence", says the *Liturgy of St. James*. With the introduction of your new vernacular, that is the one thing that poor mortal flesh is not allowed to do.

I have said that uniformity, anonymity and silence are all part of the price you will have to pay for the vernacular. Is that the extent of the bill? By no means. Let us look at another item, St. Paul's. By St. Paul's I mean the fact which emerged during the century after the Reformation, that it is all but impossible to use a vernacular liturgy, *a liturgy in which all must see and hear with ease all that is said and done*, in a building constructed for the Latin Mass. To attempt to do so is to attempt the impossible. Only what Wren called an "auditory church" can provide the architectural setting in which the attempt can be made. Hence St. Paul's. If you and your friends seriously intend to impose the

vernacular, if the proposition is anything more than a transient fad, then you must build. To attempt the task otherwise is as naive as to suppose that you can defeat tanks with bows and arrows. Now, even if you are confident of producing a twentieth-century Wren, have you the money? "If wishes were horses, beggars would ride." And remember also, for what it is worth, that in the eighteenth century a vernacular liturgy and the auditory church did not usher in a religious revival: that came from elsewhere.

The virtue of prudence, according to St. Thomas, is the virtue by which suitable means are found for the right ends. Are you and your friends being notably prudent?

Also, talking of prudence, I can find in your friend's writings little, if any, appreciation of the linguistic difficulty. This difficulty is two-pronged. If, for instance, you are in England, what of the undoubted fact that Englishmen find it difficult to speak to each other without inviting the irritation or ridicule of their listeners? You might reasonably have been expected to have considered the difficulty at a time when *My Fair Lady* has popularised the point of Shaw's *Pygmalion*. You should have expected rather than have been surprised at the complaint of a young couple that the principal effect of the wholesale introduction of the vernacular into their East Anglican parish church was that their children could now only address the Almighty in the broadest of Dublin accents. The other prong of the problem is, potentially at any rate, political. You appreciate, don't you, that a linguistic frontier is not a line but a zone? And you appreciate, don't you, that beyond that zone all will not be plain sailing? Have you ever seen a large scale linguistic and dialectical map of Europe? Are you aware of the political and social implications of language? Have you ever considered that people may buy and sell in one language, pray and talk to their friends in another? What would you do if your parish contained both Walloons and Flemings, or Frenchmen and Bretons, or Catalans and Castilians with colonies of immigrant Basques and Galicians? Or, to come nearer home, what is the vernacular of a congregation composed of three Welshmen from Anglesey, four

Lancastrians, two Spaniards (one of them from Galicia, and the other from Madrid), an Italian ice-cream man and his family, an Irish women from the Gaeltacht, a retired English major and his wife, four Irishmen from County Meath, one Glasgow Scot, one family of Poles and another of White Ruthenians, the congregation being completed by the arrival, just in time for the Gospel, of a chinless young man in a sports car in which he has given a lift to two West Indians from Grenada? Nor should you imagine that this sort of thing is likely to be an eccentric example of a passing phase. On the contrary, when England joins the Common Market we are likely to get more of it, not less. It's all very well you and your friends appealing to Pentecost: you should also consider the implications of the Tower of Babel.

And the Tower of Babel brings me to what I suspect will prove to be the most serious weakness of your movement. It is necessarily a movement in which academics and, for want of a better word, intellectuals have taken the lead, while a sizeable proportion of their followers are what Macaulay called "reckless empirics". Now, the occupational disease of academics is, as you and I know, the conviction that the rest of humanity is (potentially, at any rate) nearly as intelligent as ourselves. Despicable as they may appear, the creatures are worth teaching; and if, in particular, they are to have the inestimable privilege of being instructed by us, much indeed may be confidently expected. Hidden beneath that craggy and unrewarding landscape there awaits our delivering hand a great fund of untapped intellectual wealth, a gush of rich oil to reward our remorseless drilling. Such, too, is the popular delusion, the enticing half-truth of our own day.

In fact it is nearer the truth, in all probability, to say that most men don't develop intellectually much beyond the age of twelve. "The majority", as Newman remarked, "remain boys all their lives." They remain to a greater or less degree mentally children whose increasing acquirement of a variety of skills marks their adult lives. Their wisdom comes from their hands, not their heads. Necessarily, then, they are largely inarticulate. And when they are compelled to speak,

what they have to say is generally repetitive and second-hand. You learn from such men, not by listening to them but by watching their hands in action, and for such men the Latin Mass can do what a vernacular liturgy cannot. You will not normally find such men thronging the Anglican parish church, but you will find them at Mass. If, out of the corner of your eye, you see their faces at the Elevation of the Host, you will realize that they know more of the Mass than you do.

So much, you may say, for the illiterates, but what of the increasing number who can, to a greater or less extent, read? After all, nearly a century of compulsory public instruction, the film, wireless, television, have all had their effect, and here, surely, is the main argument for a vernacular liturgy. The truth is far otherwise. The illiterate (that is all those who cannot profitably use the printed word) follow in the main with their eyes. Hence the importance of the movement and the manual acts of the priest, and pre-eminently of the Elevation of the Host. The literate (that is those who can profitably use the printed word) follow also with their eyes, but in their case they attend both to the Book and to the Priest.

And what of the ear? What of speech? Today in England men listen as little as they can, and what they hear they usually forget. Modern techniques have made them familiar with noise as a background, and in the background it remains. Hence the decline and fall of the sermon. Try this experiment. Get a number of people in a room, and read aloud to them a passage of prose and a passage of poetry. Then examine how much has penetrated to the minds of your audience. Repeat the experiment, but give each a copy of what you are to read so that they may follow as you read. Again examine the result.

You will reply, I expect, that such an experiment is a waste of time. The answer is obvious, the second method is the right one. Then, my dear Sumpsimus, you should not have been surprised to notice that whereas when the Epistle and Gospel were in Latin, and the literate (as distinguished from the educated) followed the English translation in their

bilingual missals, nowadays they simply gape and — listen? I doubt it. Not in any real sense, for that is something they are quite unaccustomed to doing. They look as if they were listening? No doubt. They have all been to school.

Nor am I much impressed by the vigorous assertions of some of your clerical friends that now they “feel the congregation is behind them” as they say Mass in the vernacular. “Anything for a change” is the contemporary cry. The new master with a new bag of tricks can always command attention for his first term. It is later that the test comes. When your new *sumpsimus* is no longer new, when familiarity has dulled the edge of your new tool, the response will approximate to what it formerly was. Then will come the cry for more change. You will go further and, I suspect, fare worse.

You reply, do you, that all this is mere pessimism, unbecoming a Christian man? Well, listen to St. Thomas More, the man whom Swift described as “of the greatest virtue this kingdom ever produced”:

First in many places they sang the service in their mother tongue, men and women and all, and that was a pretty sport for them for awhile. But after a little use thereof, the pleasure of the novelty passed, and they set somewhat less thereby than a man's song. They changed also the mass, and soon after that many cast it up clean.

One wonders at times, I admit, how many English Catholics have in effect decided to confine their energies to the task of zealously building the tombs of More and Newman, while excusing themselves from the task of reading what these men had to say. I remain unconvinced by the proposition that Englishmen are better nourished on “the sermons of mystical Germans” than on the prose of their own scholars and saints.

The truth is that behind all the parade of modernity, the catchwords of the contemporaneous, I smell the old heresy of the romantic Conservatives. “Back to the Golden Age! Back to the Apostles! Back to the Church of the Second Century! Back to the sub-Apostolic, and mainly Judaic, Age of Christendom! We must get behind Constantine! Back to

the Catacombs! Then, and only then, will the Twentieth Century troop into our churches." Go and tell it to the Horse Marines.

Your movement is not, in fact, something new, some fresh pentecostal upsurge of new life. It is, I suspect, just old England, running true to form. Turn, for instance, to the fifteenth century, and you'll find most of your friends there, large as life. In a context of political, social and economic upheaval, erosion and loss of confidence, you have your Lollards. There are the orthodox men, hurrying up just in time to be too late, allied for the moment with the lunatic fringe of Enthusiasm. There are the men looking for an *open sesame* to success, a "secret weapon", a "discovery" which will lead to a "breakthrough" to the new Jerusalem and the Land of Promise. There are the "reckless empirics" denouncing the "bigoted dotards". And there, to be blunt, are those less attractive men and women who were so clinically analysed, as Walter Hilton saw them in actual flesh and blood, in the towns and villages of Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire. You will find them in chapter 26 of Book II of his *Scale of Perfection*. The types of humanity never die: from age to age the world is like itself.

Do not mistake my meaning, my dear Sumpsimus. I am not echoing, at any rate as yet, Bishop White of Winchester, as he preached the funeral sermon of Queen Mary Tudor: "I warn you the wolves be coming out of Germany and they have sent their books before them." On the contrary, I have a fondness for Enthusiasm. Nor am I one of those nervous Catholics who suppose that the Church is in danger. For nearly twenty centuries Rome has known how to deal with Enthusiasts, and I see no reason to suppose that she has suddenly lost her touch. At the same time it would be foolish to deny that some of your friends smell of the faggot. It was Tyndale, was it not, who complained of St. Thomas More for his refusal to admit that "buzzing in Latin, on the holy days, helpeth not the health of the people". Nor is there any denying that the campaign against Latin is violently in contradiction to the traditional position of the English Catholics.

The Elizabethan Catholics insisted on using it on the scaffold to the scandal of their executioners. Bishop Milner was admittedly not a man who suffered fools gladly, but there is a particularly contemptuous edge to his irritation in the short chapter which he devoted to that particular objection. In our own day a greater scholar than Milner, writing from outside the visible unity of the Roman Church, Fr. Gregory Dix wrote.

It is sometimes forgotten by the advocates of a vernacular liturgy that our Lord, as a Palestinian Jew, never attended a vernacular service in his life. Alike in temple and synagogue, the services were in the liturgical Hebrew which was not understood by the people without special instruction.

No, the English Catholics have always been more than ready to echo St. Paulinus of Nola:

Per te

*Barbari discunt resonare Christum
Corde Romano.*

The Latin Mass kept Margery Kempe sane, and made Margaret Clitherow into a saint. And there is no reason to suppose that it will not be equally effective in the second half of the twentieth century. I am not afraid of the Enthusiast: I am afraid of Joanna Southcott.

Have I any advice, you will ask, or am I only concerned to deplore all that you and your friends are about? By no means. I am concerned neither to curse nor to bless; instead my position is that of the candid friend. Try, I urge you, to persuade your friends not to overplay their hand. In particular, they must refrain from arguing that full participation in the Mass is all but impossible for the English Catholic unless it is in English. For that is not only patent nonsense but, since Newman disposed of it in 1848 and repeated his argument in 1874, it is inexcusable nonsense. Try also to persuade them not to imitate, in advancing their case, the extreme infallibilists of the last century, that "insolent and aggressive faction" to use Newman's accurate description. Last and most important, dissuade them from easy talk of the

guidance of the Holy Ghost. For the normal man will always think with Butler (no, my dear Sumpsimus, the Bishop, not the Abbot): "Sir, the pretending to extraordinary revelation and gifts of the Holy Ghost is a horrid thing, a very horrid thing." For, after my fashion, I am on your side.

And now, finally, let us concern ourselves with what the Americans and the politicians would call your "image". For long enough now, England's green and pleasant land has reverberated to the cheerful whirr of mechanical saws as, in Church and State, in school and factory, in counting house and college, Englishmen have been delightedly absorbed in the task of sawing off the various boughs on which they have been sitting. It was inevitable, I suppose, that a section of the English Catholics should, if belatedly, have joined in that exciting but ultimately unrewarding occupation; but one could have wished it otherwise. And so the Latin Mass has come under attack. For four centuries it has, in the mind of the ordinary Englishman, served to separate the Church of Rome from the crowd of conflicting "Christianities" as they stumbled and slithered towards their logical conclusion. In so far as it disappears, the Englishman will conclude that the Church of Rome is no more than one of "the Churches", one of those increasingly unfamiliar organisations in which his grandmother believed and his grandfather would have liked to believe; and in which he himself was baptized and married. It will be another heavy burden for the English Church. Is it really necessary?

Do not forget that phrase of Chesterton's: "wickedly wearying of the best". There is a power of percipience in that adverb.

Your affectionate uncle,

MUMPSIMUS.

“In listening to a sermon we lay ourselves open to respond to what God is trying to tell us through the preacher: what he is asking of us in our life here and now. If we have really listening hearts we shall hear the word of Christ . . .”

Is Preaching Necessary ?

FRANCIS FENN, S.J.

WE ask, and shall answer this question chiefly in regard to Sunday Mass. Subconsciously, at least, it is a question often asked by Catholics.

But in the widest sense of the term, preaching (“the ministry of the word”) includes many more activities besides the Sunday sermon: lectures, instructions, religious writing, even discussion groups — where Christians can be said to be “ministers of the word” to one another. I am aware that to “preach” to somebody has a bad connotation, but in fact one man or woman (or even child) speaking to another may, apparently quite by chance, have much more effect than the most eloquent sermon: and this without any hint of “preaching”. A good friend of mine whose wife was a Catholic was asked by his small son: “Daddy, why aren’t you a Catholic?”; and these few words started my friend on the way, even though he had to give up freemasonry in the process.

All this is to hint that “the ministry of the word” is something in which the whole Church is involved. “Bearing witness” is a term that may perhaps be better appreciated, though it is more commonly used by non-catholics than by ourselves. There is even what St. Augustine called “a visible word” — the witness of a Christian life:

“In the example of a life so lived, preaching takes place in the form of a sign. It jerks the proud and self-satisfied out of their peace and tranquillity of mind, and arouses

them . . . The sign of an exemplary life will also give new confidence to those whose faith is shaky." (1)

To present a challenge (ultimately from God) is precisely what preaching is about, and even "consolation" calls for a decision:

"Therefore lift up your dropping hands and strengthen your weak knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather healed" (2)

— words which need to be read in the context of what the sacred writer is saying about faith.

If discussion-groups, therefore, are to be counted within the "ministry of the word" they must not consist of mere talk but must lead to some kind of decision. This need not be in the strictly "religious" field:

"Representatives of the Church quite rightly make frequent comments in the areas of politics, the natural sciences, technology, medicine and sociology. Although these belong to the profane sphere they often contain points of view which make them a part of Church concern. All teaching done in these areas by the Church is . . . derived from the service of the word of God." (3)

The writer is speaking here of "official" Church teaching, in the sense of teaching by those who speak in virtue of their Christ-given office (literally "duty") in the Church. Although the whole Church bears witness to Christian truth in various ways, it is at the same time a "listening" Church. And since the incarnate Word of God is no longer visibly present on this earth, but has taken with him the fruits of his saving work so that he may gather round him a Body of faithful people; since God's final revelation in Christ is now closed and no fresh word can be spoken — in this situation (where Christ is "silent") there must be a Christ-sent ministry of the word which arouses and feeds the community's faith, reminding it that "man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God" (4)

(1) M. Schmaus, *Preaching as a saving encounter*, p. 79. (2) Hebrews 12, 12-13.

(3) Otto Semmelroth, S.J., *Church and Sacrament*, p. 57. (4) Matt. 4, 4.

As Fr. Semmelroth has written elsewhere:

"The *listening* Church receives the self-communication of the glorified Word by listening to the word proclaimed by the *teaching* Church. The community hears the Lord by listening to the Church's preaching. It confesses its readiness in faith before the Lord by having the ministry of the word performed in its midst and by trying to find the depths of God's word in the word of its official ministry . . . Those who are called and ordained to this official service of the word do not cease to be themselves members of the hearing Church." (5)

So, for example, the preacher at Mass expresses his faith in what he says and is himself bound by the implications of his preaching.

Someone once told me that he could get something out of every sermon — something, that is, of faith, of hope, of love. In listening to a sermon we lay ourselves open to respond to what God is trying to tell us through the preacher: what he is asking of us in our life here and now. If we have really listening hearts we shall hear the word of Christ through the veil of the preacher's words. "We are ambassadors of Christ", said St. Paul, "God making his appeal through us". (6)

When the Word of God was on earth in the flesh, he not only gave men knowledge and admonition. Through Christ God communicated himself to his hearers. One of the great conversions recorded in the gospels was brought about by a very few words:

"Zacchaeus, make haste and come down; for I must stay in your house today". (7)

The conversion of most of us is a slow process, gradually during our lives: and it is, for the majority, something that must be achieved by listening to Sunday sermons. If there is a readiness to hear the word of God and to believe; to accept God into our hearts through the grace which he

(5) *The Preaching Word*, p. 115.

(6) 2 Corinthians 5, 20.

(7) Luke 19, 5.

communicates, then we shall be led on to join ourselves to the sacrifice of Christ in the Eucharist. Worship with Christ as man is the answer of the heart that has listened to the voice of Christ speaking as the ambassador of his Father.

Looked at in this way, our Sunday Mass becomes a unity, rather than something which really only gets down to business after the sermon is over. In it we take part in the whole mystery of Christ — in whom God's invitation to mankind was brought to perfection, and the perfect human response was given to that invitation.

But although

"the listener cannot come as a dilettante looking forward to a well-presented and interesting content, but who switches off when his expectations are not fulfilled", (8)

this does not mean that the content of a sermon is unimportant. Let us face the fact that the Catholic Church (at least in this country) has tended to underrate the importance of the sermon ("the ministry of the word"), while protestants have overrated it at the expense of the sacraments.

Under the influence of the recent Vatican Council, however, a close look is being taken at the training of future priests in this matter. Sermons, I may confidently predict, will be better in the not too distant future. In the meantime, let us be patient with our priests. Preaching is, in the best of circumstances, a difficult art, and a priest's whole life may be spent

"trying to learn to use words; and every attempt is a wholly new start, and a different kind of failure: because one has only learnt to get the better of words for the thing one no longer has to say, or the way in which one is no longer disposed to say it". (9)

According to the Vatican Council, the sermon at Mass (or "homily") should normally be based on the Scripture readings which have preceded it or on the liturgy which itself has a scriptural basis. (10) In the past this has not been easy.

(8) *Church and Sacrament*, p. 58.

(9) *Clergy Review*, June, 1969.

(10) Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, art. 24, 35, 52.

the same readings appear year after year, and we wonder how unconvincing the priest is going to be about the parable of the unjust steward this time! Some of the epistles seem to have been selected for their obscurity. But in future

“the treasures of the Bible are to be opened up more lavishly, so that richer fare may be provided for the faithful at the table of God’s word. In this way a more representative portion of the holy Scriptures will be read to the people over a set cycle of years.” (11)

Work has been proceeding on this line since the close of the Council, and a great deal of care has been put into the preparation of a new series of Scripture readings for Sunday Mass. This work has now been completed, and three readings are offered for each Sunday, reasonably short in length. (One of the first two, from the Old Testament and the New Testament outside the four gospels, may be omitted if necessary.)

Moreover, we shall not be hearing the same reading each year, but only once in three years. Holy Scripture is the permanent form of God’s word in the Church, and this new arrangement should be of great value in itself, as well as making the work of the preacher easier and, we hope, more fruitful than in the past.

We should not forget to pray for the preacher as he, no doubt, will pray for his hearers.

(11) *ibid*, art. 51

CURRENT COMMENT

A comparison to the detriment of the Church made some months ago by Norman St. John Stevas in Glasgow is examined by Father Crane and shown to be meaningless. The emotive terms in which it was couched typify the expression of progressive opinion within the Church today.

Meaningless Comparison

THE EDITOR

READING some time ago in the *Tablet* the report of a public meeting held in Glasgow last June under the auspices of the Scottish Catholic Renewal Movement, I was struck by the following sentence; "Similarly when Norman St. John Stevas compared the Church's absolute stand on contraception with her unhappy stand on race, social justice and war the audience broke into waves of applause".

So far as I can see St. John Stevas' reported comparison can bear four interpretations. It is impossible to deduce from the report which one he intended when he spoke. The only thing to do, therefore, is to take all four and examine them singly. In each case, I think, the comparison will be found to be misplaced; which makes the reported cheering all the more interesting.

A First Interpretation

On a *first* interpretation, Stevas may have intended to compare the absolute — by which, I take it, he means uncompromising — pronouncement of Paul VI against contraception with what he thinks of as the failure of the Church to pronounce in similar terms against racial discrimination, in favour of social justice and, presumably, against war. If this was the compromise intended by Stevas,

then one can only say that he is wrong. John XXIII, Paul VI and the Council Fathers have pronounced as strongly against racial discrimination as Paul VI against contraception. If Catholics are unaware of this, it can only be because less publicity has been given to these pronouncements than to that against contraception, which would seem to imply that Catholics are less interested in racial discrimination than in limiting the size of their families; a thing hardly to their credit when you come to think of it.

So far as social justice is concerned, it is, really, extremely ignorant to suggest that pronouncements in favour of its practice from Leo XIII to Paul VI have been less uncompromising than those of Pius XI and Paul VI against contraception. Finally, with regard to war, the Church, indeed, has not condemned all war as such, for the simple reason that much depends on the type of war under consideration. Moreover, the doctrine of the just war is, in the opinion of many sound theologians, not yet outmoded despite greatly altered circumstances due to nuclear weapons. An absolute statement against war in general would seem to be not merely uncalled for, but impossible under such circumstances.

An examination of the first interpretation that can be placed on the comparison quoted in the *Tablet* shows it to be wrong because made in ignorance of the facts.

A Second Interpretation

A second interpretation of the comparison reportedly made by St. John Stevas in Glasgow could be that, when making it, he had in mind the thought that the pronouncements of the Church concerning race, social justice and war had not been effectively pursued within the Church itself or society at large. In this, he is probably correct. But, at the same time, he is wrong to class as unhappy the Church's stand in this matter, as if to imply that the supreme teaching authority of the Church is to blame for the ineffective follow-up of papal pronouncements. Failure here has to be laid, not at the door of the Vatican, but at that of others within the Church and

society at large. It was Stalin, after all, who asked how many divisions the Vatican had.

Moreover — still on this second interpretation — Stevas is wrong also in the terms of his comparison. Judged by the ineffectiveness of its follow-up, the Church's stand on contraception ought to be classified as "unhappy" rather than "absolute". Stevas ought to know this, for he is one of a considerable number of progressive priests and laymen who have publicly opposed Pope Paul's teaching on contraception and helped, thereby, to make it ineffective.

A Third Interpretation

We are brought to a *third* interpretation of the comparison reported in the *Tablet*; of what could have been in Stevas' mind when he made it. It could have been that he was comparing the uncompromising nature of the Church's *pronouncements* on contraception with her failure — in view of an equally uncompromising series of pronouncements in the case of race and social justice — *to apply to society at large* her policies on race, social justice and war. We have seen above where the blame must be laid for this sort of failure. But the point to be noted now is that the comparison is between two totally different things; the nature of a *pronouncement* on the one hand and, on the other, the kind of *activity* used in support of a policy called for by equally firm pronouncements (in the case of racial discrimination and social justice) on an entirely different matter.

If this comparison had been used by Mr. St. John Stevas in a scholastic disputation, the appropriate answer to it would have been, "*Nego paritatem*". In other words, there is no parity, no basis of comparison, therefore, between the two things he seeks to compare; on the one hand, the nature of a pronouncement on contraception and, on the other, the effectiveness of policies pursued in support of equally firm pronouncements on at least two entirely different points of teaching (we have seen that the state of the debate about war makes an uncompromising statement impossible at this juncture). Measuring one of these terms against the other is

rather like comparing the intestinal structure of an oyster with one of Milton's sonnets. It cannot be done, for the terms of reference are quite different in each case. This makes any comparison based on them meaningless and, therefore, quite without value.

A Fourth Interpretation

I cannot think that St. John Stevas would be guilty of such illogic as this. Neither do I lay it at his door; but this interpretation of his comparison had to be included in order that our survey of it might be complete. We are brought to the *fourth* and last interpretation that can be placed on the comparison attributed to him in the *Tablet*. It could well be that Stevas had in mind when he spoke at Glasgow the (seeming) willingness of the Church to yield her position on matters of race, social justice and war and her refusal to do so on any point of contraception. If this was the point of Stevas' comparison, as I rather think it may have been, then the implication would seem to be that Stevas would have the Church be as unyielding over the evils of racism, social injustice and war as she has proved to be over that of contraception. This would seem to carry the further and curious implication that St. John Stevas approves of the Church's stand over contraception; whereas, in fact, he has shown quite clearly that he does not. When, therefore, Stevas classifies as "unhappy" the Church's stand on race, social justice and war, he would appear to be doing no more than giving us one more example of the pot calling the kettle black. The last people, surely, to blame the Church for yielding her position (if, indeed, she does) on race, social justice, war or anything else you care to think of, are St. John Stevas and all those others who blame her for *not* yielding her position on contraception. Blaming her, as they do, in the same breath, for not yielding on contraception and yielding on race, social injustice and war, they are proving themselves not only illogical, to put it mildly, but close to the very English position of those who want religion on their own terms or not at all. They are guilty of selective moralising at its worst.

They are for the authority of the Church only when it suits them, when it does what they want; which means that they have no real understanding at all of the true nature of the Church's teaching authority.

Difficulties Confronting the Church

Be this as it may, we must continue with our examination of this *fourth* interpretation of Stevas' Glasgow comparison. As already noted, this interpretation sees the comparison as setting the Church's (seeming) readiness to yield her position on points of race, justice and war *against* her refusal to do so over contraception. If Stevas had this comparison in mind at Glasgow and placed it to the discredit of the Church, he did so, I think, because of his inability to realise the difficulties confronting the Church when she seeks to secure the assent of men to points of her teaching, particularly those of a controversial nature. She cannot enforce her teaching; she has no divisions and she does not want them. Any attempt on her part to force her teaching on men would violate their dignity as responsible human beings. Men must accept her teaching freely or not at all. Anything else is repugnant to their *human* nature. It follows that there will be many occasions when the Church is made to appear helpless in face of the resistance of those who disregard or spurn her teaching. To interpret her helplessness under these circumstances as yielding her position is as cruelly illogical as blaming the inhabitants of Nazi-occupied Europe for not rising up and overcoming the Hitler regime. This, I think, is the first point: for the Church to be forced to tolerate the rejection of a point of her teaching and to live with the evil consequences of that rejection is not the same as yielding her position with regard to it.

Examples in aid of this general proposition can be multiplied. Benedict XV had his fourteen peace points rejected by the Allied Powers in World War I; Pius XI complained publicly of those who forbade *Quadragesimo Anno*, with its passionate plea for social justice, to be read in the pulpits of their churches; Paul VI has seen his condemnation

of contraception disregarded by society at large and spurned by a good many Catholics, including Norman St. John Stevas. Yet, in the face of this opposition, the Church has not yielded by one inch her position on peace, social justice or contraception. What, then, are we to make of those who insinuate that she has done so: Catholics like Stevas who contrast her "absolute" stand on contraception with her "unhappy" stand on race, social justice and war?

A Matter of Appearances

I think they are taken in by appearances. Because the Church *appears* less active in the promotion, say, of racial justice — or, conversely, more helpless in the face of racial injustice — than in her condemnation of contraception, they accuse her of marking time to the scandal of the Faithful in a field they consider of special urgency at the present time. Appearances, of course, are deceptive. The Church is probably more helpless in face of the general disregard of her teaching on contraception than she would be in face of the same disregard extended to her teaching on race. However this may be, I think the Church *seems* to Stevas and his friends to be more tolerant of racial injustice than contraception in all probability because, at local level, she does not oppose racial injustice *in the ways they think she should*. In their view, she is not openly tough or resistant enough and has, therefore, yielded ground. Not having gone forward in this matter in *their* way, she is accused by them of giving way.

At this point, it is easy to see that the ground of the argument has shifted — from the general pronouncements of the Church against, say, racialism, to the seeming ineffectiveness of local Hierarchies when it comes to giving the Church's teaching on this point local and concrete expression. I have explained above that helplessness of the Church in face of racial injustice is not to be interpreted as yielding to it. Yet, I rather believe St. John Stevas and others would deny this as a general statement and accuse the Church of being soft on the matter of racial injustice unless and until she has tried

every means — which means every means *they* think she should make use of — to overcome it. In other words, the Church must adopt the means they think best for overcoming a particular evil or else be accused of softness with regard to it. The arrogance of this mentality is, of course, beyond belief; so, too, are its naivete and conceit. I can only hope that I have totally misjudged Stevas and his friends and that this fourth interpretation of his Glasgow comparison is quite incorrect.

Meaningless Comparison

What, then, is correct? Not the first, second and third interpretations of his comparison, which have already been examined. Now, not the fourth. I can only conclude that St. John Stevas' reported comparison between the Church's "absolute" stand on contraception and her "unhappy" stand on social injustice, racism and war is meaningless. It does not make sense. It would appear to present no more than a piece of misguided emotional prejudice quite unworthy of one who has been trained in the law. And it is hardly to the credit of Stevas' audience — composed of supposedly hard-headed Scots — that its members should have greeted his meaningless comparison with wave after wave of cheers. But this kind of caper is not untypical of the times in which we live.

Catholic Press and the Progressives

It might be worth noting at this point that approximately 2,500 words have been used up in an examination of a sentence of six lines. This is the common fate of those who take it on themselves to examine the sentiments of lay and clerical progressives in the Church today. It explains why their somewhat shoddy case, presented with such emotion, is challenged so rarely. It is the old story of a volume being needed to refute a pamphlet and, as many read pamphlets and so few volumes, the case for the defence of the Church in these critical times has often to go by the board. It is a pity that this should be the case and great damage will be done so long as it is. Under the circumstances, one would have

thought that Catholic editors, who are presumed to have the good of the Church at heart, would open their columns to those who wish to refute some of the nonsense at present pouring off the points of progressive pens. Unfortunately, this would not appear to be the case. One of the saddest things at the moment is the way in which the Catholic Weekly Press in so many countries has closed its columns to all but exponents within the Church of the progressive/liberal case.

One result of this has been that a reasoned yet strong defence of the Church's position at popular level and in face of progressive attack has not yet appeared. With the moderates forbidden a hearing, the defence at popular level of what might be called the conservative (as opposed to the progressive) position within the Church has tended to fall into immoderate hands; very good people, for the most part, driven nearly frantic by what they think of — often quite rightly — as an attack against the whole heritage of the Faith. The point comes when, because seemingly there is no one to defend their Faith at a level they can understand, they take its defence upon themselves. Inevitably they exaggerate, filling the immediate air with conspiracy theories and building up men of straw to fill the role of scapegoat for our present discontents. Their efforts are primitive and they look primitive to those around them. Because of this they are laughed at by their progressive opponents. The effect of the laughter is to drive members of the dissident Catholic Right in on themselves; to make them more reactionary than they were before and to polarize still further the position between themselves and the Progressive Left. Meanwhile, the vast bulk of the Catholic population is left in the centre, worried, confused and not knowing what to do; wondering what is happening to the Church. Thus the situation becomes critical. Overborne by the confusion, a large number of good people are losing faith in the Church; slipping out of its loosened embrace with sadness, not knowing where to go.

The Obligation on Theologians

Under the circumstances, I would have thought, a heavy

obligation rests on theologians and teachers of non-progressive persuasion to come together with a view to mounting a plan of teaching, preaching and instruction that will set the hearts of the Faithful at rest; something that will enable them to see their way through the many current sophistries so curiously and cruelly advanced today in the name of progress. Examples, unfortunately, are only too easy to find. Catholic children coming out of the primary schools in my part of London are talking now of "blessed bread"; no longer of the body and blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ in the Blessed Eucharist. The Faithful in some quarters are being brainwashed into the view of certain young priests that the Mass is *only* a meal when it is, in fact, a sacrifice as well and in spite of the fact that the number of times the Council Fathers mentioned it as a sacrifice in comparison with a meal is in the ratio of 10 to 1. Prayer is scouted, devotion to Our Lady downgraded, statues of the saints pitched out of churches which are being turned into empty barns. I do not think it too much to say that, in the Church today, there are those who seek — consciously and sub-consciously — to erode the essence of the Faith; and they are having far more success than otherwise would be the case because of the confusion prevalent in the Catholic Centre which is full of people who are good, yet without a lead for reasons already indicated earlier in these Notes.

Need to Defend the Faith

The need now is for literature in defence of the Faith and, even more importantly, for instruction in defence of the Faith. Five years ago I would not have made this recommendation. I would have called for a teaching literature that made know the riches of the Faith. This, unfortunately has not come. Instead, we have had a Progressive outpouring which, as the great Père de Lubac remarked last summer in the United States, has distorted the message of the Council. And the distortions have had time to take root in the minds of many. There must be a literature, therefore, that dislodges them and there must be planned instruction that does the same.

The Naked Ape has had an enormous success. Everyone who cares for the truth should read the reply: *Naked Ape or Homo Sapiens?*

The Naked Ape Myth

E. L. WAY

DO certain books create a public mood, or is the mood already present and the books appear at the right moment and make it eloquently vocal? In many cases it would appear that the mood comes first, and then the authors give it a respectable habitation and a name. Thus, for example, disenchantment with war was widespread after 1919. But it was not until 1927 that Arnold Zweig wrote *The Case of Sergeant Grischa*, and not until 1929 that Erich Maria Remarque sold 500,000 copies in less than 3 months of his world famous novel *All Quiet on the Western Front*. Remarque claimed to be the spokesman of a "generation that was destroyed by war, even though it might have escaped its shells". More precisely his characters were representative of a certain type rather than of a whole generation; but they were certainly authentic records of that type. And after the publication of the novel many who had fought in the war reshaped and moulded their experience anew after reading Remarque's account of it. Thus extremely popular books do not only proclaim a mood, but also create it in those not originally affected. Herein lies their acknowledged power for good or evil.

Malaise

In the last few years gloom and despondency have descended on the minds of men. The war in Vietnam drags on, racial strife has torn cities in two in the United States, radical governments have been elected and are incapable of defeating what Belloc called the "money power", the police

and the mob provide us with an almost nightly spectacle of fear and violence, the Russians and the Chinese are on the crater's edge of a war of terrifying proportions: everywhere, in short, the forces of civilization are on the defensive or have taken to their heels. And at the right psychological moment three authors have written their books making eloquently vocal the mood of despondency which seizes most of us at times like a gripe in the gut. The books are: Konrad Lorenz's *Aggression* (1966), Robert Ardrey's *The Territorial Imperative* (1967) and *The Naked Ape* (1967) by Desmond Morris.

Popularity and Message

What sold *The Naked Ape* by the hundred thousand, apart from the brilliant writing was (1) its provocative and profoundly misleading title, (2) the picture of the naked man, woman and child used for advertising it, (3) the quotable passages on sex, (4) the fashionable craving for degradation, and the enjoyment to be had by emphasizing and rubbing in the horrible. Psychiatrists have got a name for this eccentric form of pleasure. They call it *algolagnia*. The message of the book is as plain as it is scientifically false and psychologically damaging. In simple terms Lorenz and after him Ardrey and Morris seek to show that aggression is a basic instinct in all animals. It has great survival value because it (a) establishes the power of the most forceful males which by selection produce, protect and care for the tougher offspring, (b) it prevents over-population within a group by spreading the animals over the available territory and (c) makes for order by establishing the authority of the more powerful males. The weaker animals soon learn to submit and take their place in the right "pecking order". The evolutionary pattern, it is argued, not only produces aggression but also 'inherited patterns of restraint'; if this did not happen the species would destroy itself.

If only the powerful, amongst men, would learn not to kill but to subdue, and the weak would learn 'appeasement' war and revolutions would cease. A fine 'philosophy' surely

for the founding of a new Fascist state. It is strange how patterns of 'thought' can be misapplied to the human situation. When Darwin wrote there were employers and economists who applied 'the survival of the fittest' to the human relationships barely existing in industry. Today we have three writers, enjoying immense popular success, who make it easy for the journalists who serve our competitive society to preach the gospel of aggression for the best of reasons: aggression is 'natural' to man.

The Reply

With commendable speed two writers, Bernard Towers and John Lewis, one a Christian and the other a Marxist, have accurately heaved a large brick at this edifice of 'naked apery'. Their book *Naked Ape or Homo Sapiens?** is a scientific reply to what is at best a very shoddy piece of twentieth-century folklore, at worst a psychologically damaging libel on the human race. Towers and Lewis point out that the processes of evolution can never be judged, or even correctly described by a strict adherence to origins. Because a chicken comes from an egg no one in his senses would say that the chicken is a peculiar kind of egg. A Greek philosopher long ago disposed of a silly definition of man as a "featherless biped" by producing a dead plucked chicken and saying: "Here is your man." This judging a tree by its roots rather than by its fruits is a depressing folly that has attractions for a certain kind of mind. Evolutionary processes, the authors say, "must be defined by their *direction*, their achieved differences, their inherent possibilities, and their deducible *future trends* . . . Continuity of the new with the old does not mean, therefore, that in the new we find 'nothing but' its origins" (p. 67). And again "There is no more reason to call him (man) an ape than to call him a frog or a fish. That he shares more characteristics with the ape, is not a convincing reason. The mammal shares an immense range of organic and biological processes with the fish. The question remains,

* Published by the Garnstone Press, 59 Bromston Rd., London SW3. I would urge everyone to buy a copy or order it from the library.

is *there something really new?* If so, the philosophy of 'nothing but' does not hold" (p. 68).

The authors are specially devastating on the uniqueness of man: on the qualities in him which make it possible for him, alone amongst the other animals, to create his own conditions of life, to make his own history. "The history of animals is made for them, their normal condition is given by the conditions in which they live and to which they adapt themselves. Man is not 'only an ape'; he is not 'only an animal'. He is a mammal, but not only a mammal. His physical organism in certain vital respects shows a definite advance, but these anatomical differences are the basis for the appearance of abstract reason, a new level of intelligence, which starts man on a new career not of bodily changes but of psycho-social evolution, to use a phrase of Huxley's — that is to say the creation of a civilization and its development. It is on this plane that evolution now continues in the development of civilization and the recreation at every step forward of man himself" (p. 76).

The Resort to 'Instinct'

The word *instinct* is one of the vaguest and most exasperating words in the language. It must have been responsible for stopping our advance in understanding probably more than any other word. For years anything we did not understand was smothered under it. How does the swallow flying back from Africa in the spring find its nest in Middlesex? The answer used to be 'instinct'. How do bees find their way about—sometimes from as far away as two miles, and over the brow of a hill? Until Karl von Frisch wrote *Bees: Their vision, chemical senses and language* the answer was 'instinct'. (It is true that recent work in America has thrown some doubt on the findings of Frisch.) As the authors of *Naked Ape or Homo Sapiens?* state "The resort to some 'instinct' or 'principle' as an explanation really tells us nothing." If men are social in their behaviour, this is an example of 'the herd instinct'. If they are solitary, this is the 'anti-social instinct'. If they

fight then this is an example of their 'aggressive instinct'. The authors ask 'have we got an inch further' with such explanations? They continue "Modern psychology does not proceed by such means. It seeks for the particular conditions which can be shown to be responsible for fear, or anger, or aggression, in the absence of which the phenomenon does not appear. This is the only valid kind of scientific explanation. Merely to invoke a principle, or invent some plausible myth, is insufficient because the 'principle' says nothing at all, but merely gives a name to the problem, while a myth, or story, or theory which simply accounts for the fact in a plausible way, does not exclude a dozen other plausible theories, and we are left with a welter of contradictory views none of which can be proved or disproved. We come back to the necessity for *testing* an hypothesis if it is to be acceptable. Plausibility is never enough" (p. 62).

It is extraordinary how long legends last. In spite of the evidence many still tend to believe in an aggressive cannibal killing wild beasts with stone weapons, dragging his women off by the hair, believe, in short, that some such figment of a banal imagination was the ancestor of man. The opposite is the truth. If man had not been able to co-operate with his fellow-men he would not have survived. In the small groups, of the order of 10 to 100 individuals, mutual aid and caring for one another were not only highly valued but were absolutely necessary. "Hence it is highly improbable that anything remotely resembling an instinct of aggression would have developed, not to mention an instinct for territoriality" (Professor Ashley Montague quoted in *Naked Ape or Homo Sapiens?* p.54).

A Changing Church in a Changing World

IX: The Formation of a Christian

JOHN MURRAY, S.J.

THESE days one discovers certain new tendencies in Christian spiritual writers. They would argue that they are writing more positively and constructively — in reaction against the more negative manner of the past. Traditional Christian spirituality — they would suggest — widened too much the gulf between religion and the world. It spoke of the Christian as 'in the world but not of the world'. Christian life was seen as something set apart from ordinary life. It was too preoccupied with the thought of sin and temptations; it isolated Christians from other men. But if there is some truth in this, as there may well be, this was due to men's efforts to follow ideals and principles in a world that provided constant hindrances and temptations, and where man himself was conscious of his own weakness and liability to sin. If there appears some contradiction in Christian mistrust and renunciation of a world which is after all of God's creation, this is all part and parcel of the wider contradiction of a world corrupted through man's sin. If it be urged against the more traditional outlook that it made men *take sin too seriously*, it is easy to reply that these newer approaches encourage men *not to take sin seriously enough*, with the results that are only too evident in modern society.

The Cult of the World

Under the influence of modern existentialist thinking, man is considered now as essentially *in-the-world*, and having to make his way and find his salvation in the world.

His condition is fundamentally *in-the-world-ness*. God wants men to find their salvation, not through detachment from the world but through commitment to the world. This view rejects the notion of a duality between the outlook of the Christian and of the world. This duality encouraged, they would say, double standards, almost double-thinking. As Christians, men professed to live according to Christian standards; as men of the world and in the world, they actually lived like anyone else. The world has now to be accepted, used by man, and it is there that man finds his true significance and salvation.

Of this you will discover many an echo. Gabriel Marcel, in his *Journal Métaphysique*, has written:

"My most intimate and most unshakeable conviction — too bad for orthodoxy if it is heretical — is that, whatever so many spiritual and learned men may have said, God in no way wants to be loved by us in opposition to creation, but to be glorified through creation and starting from it. That is why I cannot bear so many spiritual writings. This God, set up against creation and somehow jealous of His own handiwork, is, in my eyes, an idol. And I declare that until I retract this, I shall be insincere whenever I seem to state anything contrary to what I have just written".

The opinions of Père Teilhard de Chardin are sufficiently familiar. "I would like to be able to have a great love for Christ . . . in the very act of loving the universe. Besides union with God and union with the world is there not a union with God through the world?"

Too Individual

Such writers will complain that Christians in the past, in dealing with a personal, spiritual life, have been too introspective, too self-concerned. They were content to dig and hoe and plant in the 'garden of the soul', little concerned about the needs and problems of their neighbours. Spiritual life became something of an individual luxury, and made little impact on the world outside. Growth in spirituality

was seen as personal transformation rather than service for and to others. Today — the argument continues — we have to seek and discover God, and in particular Christ, in others. The modern Christian should start with the world as a given fact and he expects to find God there. And so, inevitably, individual prayer loses much of its significance. Man no longer withdraws from the world to discover God: on the contrary, to do that he must go out from himself, and into the world. What used to be accepted as the necessary Christian *ascetic* as the background for spiritual development is exchanged for the effort and sacrifice involved in this exterior search for God.

We have to discover God, as has been said, where God chooses to meet us today, in the people we encounter, the work we do, the secular city in which we dwell. Retirement from the world is indeed unhealthy and it may end in emptiness and disillusionment. Such retirement, it has been suggested, may be merely cowardice. Consciously or unconsciously, detachment may be used as an excuse for apathy to cloak a selfish refusal to be interested in our fellow-men and to be involved in human responsibilities. That good and sound elements can be seen in this new approach, no one would gainsay, even when one would criticise its all too radical rejection of earlier Christian thinking. But it has its dangers. One of these is a naive optimism. The problem of sin is not solved by ignoring it, and it is in more appalling evidence at the present time, surely, than ever before. Without proper personal development and formation, a man is far too easily swallowed up by his own interests and pleasures; he readily identifies his plans and activities with God's Will; personal preferences can become his touchstone rather than any serious sense of duty. In the last resort, keenness and generosity, even where they are genuine, are not enough; they require direction and restraint.

Too Bright an Outlook

The new trend, of which I have been speaking, has been

no doubt encouraged by the renewed emphasis on the Resurrection. At one time, it was the habit to regard the Resurrection of Christ — more so in Protestant than Catholic circles — as a seal set upon the work of Redemption, but almost as an afterthought or epilogus. The stress was in the main on Calvary. Easter was the triumph after the fight had been fought, the conflict overcome. It is now more fully understood that, in the spirit of the Pauline epistles, the Resurrection is an essential part of the redemptive process. Christ consummated His sacrifice and surrender to the Eternal Father on the cross, and that sacrifice was crowned with radiance and victory on Easter Day. On more than one occasion St. Paul draws a parallel between the Redemption and its effects in the sacrament of baptism. As Christ died on Calvary, so does the catechumen die spiritually at baptism, sharing in the death of his Lord. Correspondingly, as that Lord rose from the dead at Easter, so too the catechumen, now baptized, rises with the risen Christ to the new life of grace and union with God. Both notes are fundamental: that of grief and tragedy, in sympathy with the suffering and dying Christ, that of rejoicing and triumph in His victory. We no longer see the arms of the cross on Calvary as merely grim and sombre; even now they are beginning to light up beneath the Easter rays. Yet, it is always important to recall that the Passion and Death of Christ were the chosen prelude to the Resurrection, that, if it is true that the sacrifice and sorrows of Holy Week were transformed in the Paschal victory, that victory came only after Holy Week: in other words, that Calvary was the price of triumph.

Lest We Forget

As I have suggested, many useful and encouraging ideas may be found in these newer approaches. But there is also a danger that we may forget or ignore some older and more traditional concepts which are every bit as necessary, and without which our pattern of the spiritual life may be unbalanced. I am referring here in the first place to what

has usually been known as ascetic formation. The expression 'ascetic' is not at the moment fashionable. It has had some unfortunate overtones; it is deemed too negative. Expressions such as 'self-denial' and 'mortification' particularly so: and they would be so, were it not for the more positive purpose for which such practices were adopted. They are negative, if you like, in that they involve saying NO to something, ultimately to oneself: what is by no means negative is the reason why that NO is said.

If we consider *askesis*, to employ the Greek word, in the meaning of St. Paul, as we find it recommended to the young Christians of Corinth in Paul's second epistle, it signifies 'getting fit' (physically fit, to begin with) or 'training for something'. We all recognise these days the necessity of training for a job or profession. People seek to be qualified, to be accepted as capable of doing this or the other kind of work. The skilled worker is a trained worker: in other language, he has been through a course or process that is ascetic. All effort, in particular sustained effort, demands its own *ascetic*: negatively, as St. Paul indicates, by abstaining from whatever might be an obstacle or hindrance for what we are aiming at: positively, by concentrating on what is likely to help us and be of positive value. All serious work imposes its *ascetic*. It makes its demands and lays its claims, and at times these may be severe. It makes us say NO to ourselves and concentrate on what is likely to prove useful and of advantage.

A Moral Askesis

The point St. Paul is making in his Corinthian letter is that the moral life of a Christian has its inevitable *askesis*, and that it is an *askesis* of far greater significance than the training requisite for any merely sublunary purpose. It too has its negative and positive, its restraining and constructive sides. It would teach and habituate us to refrain from what is harmful, dangerous and incompatible with that life: either from the general uncertainty and unreliability of human nature — the tendency to drift and float, the self-centredness

and sensuality, the touchiness and self-importance — or from the more specific faults and failings of the individual. And, on the constructive side, it puts its emphasis on what can help to build up a healthier, sounder character. Granted that this is only a sub-structure for the more genuinely spiritual life. Maybe, it is only that, but at least it is that, and sound sense and long experience indicate how necessary and valuable it can be. With an ill-fitting, ricketty sub-structure you will not go very far.

Personal Responsibility

Modern thinking lays considerable stress — and very rightly so — on the notion of the human person. Even our relation with God is often referred to as the I-Thou relationship, it terms of Martin Buber. Christian charity supposes more and more a capacity on our part of recognising and respecting the dignity of the other person or persons we are in contact with. The much-used word 'existentialist' implies that we consider problems and situations from just exactly what and where we ourselves are, that is in our personal capacity. The notion of 'responsibility' is surely akin to this. The personal note means that we are not just members of a class or group but stand out on our own, and enjoy a measure of personal freedom. Possibly, our way of thinking of liberty is again too negative, of being free from this or that, of not being regimented.

Yet the basic concept of freedom is that of limitation or restraint. Freedom does not indicate saying or doing this, that or the other, as we please. What it indicates is action after reasoned decision. And we have to take this decision upon ourselves. Decision however implies inevitably limitation. I choose one thing or one course of action out of several, and I thereby limit myself for the future. A man who marries one woman limits himself with regard to the other women he might have married. A man who qualifies as doctor or lawyer normally gives up a number of other careers. In other words, there is an *askesis* in every decision, an *askesis* in a choice of marriage or of a career. For freedom

is ultimately to commit oneself, and in the process a large measure of vague and potential liberty has to be abandoned. All decision, as I have said, has its *askesis*. And this is all the more true and relevant, when we think of it in terms of an ethical life.

The Power to Give an Account

The term 'responsibility' suggests its own explanation. It is an ancient word, redolent of the classical philosophy from which it is derived. It is based on the rational, that is reasoning, character of our human nature and supposes that we are able to give a reasonable account of — or response or reply about — our behaviour. No doubt, in recent years we have learnt a good deal more of the irrational and emotional factors, as also of the subconscious and unconscious elements, that influence behaviour. But the fact remains that, despite all these, we are accounted reasonable beings, *responsible* for — and therefore *able to give a response* about — our actions. The more a person claims to be truly personal, the more he should be ready and able to do this. To whom? Not so much to the world at large, unless his conduct is so outrageous that the world begins to imagine he would be better housed in a prison or a lunatic asylum, but to himself. This again is to throw the onus back, and upon himself. In another sense, this responsibility is before God, because the appeals, the demands, the opportunities we are dealing with come to us from God. What we make of them, how we correspond with them, in the final resort is our responsibility to and before God.

Commitment

The life of a Christian is a response, an answer to an appeal, over and above the beliefs we have accepted and the commandments which are for our observance. On the quality of this response, and the measure of commitment of ourselves that is fitted into it depends our love and service of God. Where love is high, commitment will be generous, and all necessary *askesis* will be a light obligation. The

higher we set our sights and aim, the readier shall we be to make the efforts and sacrifices that are involved. In this sense, the positive becomes the real answer and solution for the negative. We will find it easier to say NO when we have genuinely dedicated our persons and lives to a life pattern and ideal, with which that NO is essentially linked.

What I have been saying about the *ascetic* in a Christian life takes us back to the problem of the right use of 'things', that is, of objects, opportunities, circumstances, in the world. Our service of God is not one merely of subjection. The psalmist's appeal to us to subject ourselves in all humility under the mighty hand of God does not exhaust our relationship with the Almighty. We are God's subjects. It is well and wise to bear that in mind. "Know ye" — the psalms remind us once more — "that the Lord is God. It is He that made us, and we are his." But He made us, not for mere servility but to act as His agents and partners. Our service is one also of co-operation. We are learning nowadays to look at human achievement with a new eye, and to see it all as man's use of the powers which God has given him, and of the material resources that God has placed at his disposal. Christ made this clear to the apostles when He assured them that they were no mere servants but friends indeed to whom He had opened His mind and communicated His secrets, and who were to work with Him.

Our Christian witness should be regarded as the total expression of our use of 'things', of our human stewardship while we are in this world, always of course mindful of and thankful, very thankful indeed, to God.

In this the first of a series of articles Dr. Jackson raises the general problems connected with taxation: the need for taxes, the functions of government in, amongst other duties, the control of the economy, the use of taxation as a method of redistributing income, and the complex matter of the ability to pay.

Our System of Taxation

(i) Objectives

J. M. JACKSON

NOBODY likes paying taxes, and it is not surprising, therefore, that our system of taxation should be the subject of criticism. Somebody is always likely to complain, and the fact that there are complaints does not mean, in itself, that there is anything wrong with the system. On the other hand, we should not go to the other extreme and assume that all criticism comes from those who merely want to escape the burden of taxation whilst continuing to enjoy the benefits resulting from government expenditure.

Why must we have Taxes?

The first question we need to answer is why we need to have taxation at all. There are three reasons. First, the government needs to do certain things, and therefore needs money to pay for them. We may find that there is room for debate as to what kind of things the government ought to do, but nobody would dispute the fact that there are some things which the government must do.

Secondly, the government may use taxation as part of the mechanism of economic control. In times of inflation, it may increase taxation in order to reduce the pressure of

demand, and in times of depression it may reduce taxation in order to stimulate economic activity.

Thirdly, the government may use taxation to re-distribute income.

The Role of Government

There are some functions that most people would agree properly belong to the government and to the government alone. The defence of the country against external aggression, the maintenance of law and order, the administration of justice, and so on are clearly functions that nobody today would argue should be left to private enterprise. One may quarrel with aspects of government policy with regard to defence—or any of the other functions—but there is no questioning the fact that these are essentially governmental functions. One would maintain that these were governmental functions because they are of such fundamental importance to the community that it would be wrong to leave them in any other hands.

Not all functions exercised by governments today are of this kind, however. Other reasons exist why certain functions should be exercised by the government. It may be desirable that certain things should be done, and, at the same time, it may be impracticable for them to be done by private enterprise. A service like street lighting, for example, is one where it would be difficult, if not impossible, to finance by making charges on those using the service. The only practicable way of charging for the service is for the state to make use of its powers of levying taxes.

In other instances, services are provided by the government because it is believed this is the only way in which a satisfactory service can be provided for all citizens, or because it is believed that the state can provide a better service. The vast extension of state social services comes under this category, and the correct role of the government is much more difficult to determine. All kinds of problems are raised by the creation of a virtual state monopoly in,

for example, medical care, and by the far-reaching state social security schemes.

Controlling the Economy

Before the second world war it was assumed that the government levied taxes in order to finance its expenditure. A budget deficit was something that was to be avoided in normal times: the national debt was, for the most part, the result of deficits that had been incurred in time of war. Any small surpluses would be used to reduce the national debt, though the idea of paying off the national debt had long been abandoned as a serious objective.

With the gradual acceptance of Lord Keynes's ideas on the causes of unemployment, the role of the budget changed greatly. Incomes are created in the process of producing goods and services. If we neglect the complications of international trade, the total of incomes in a community will be exactly equal to the value of goods and services produced. If for example, an article sells for a certain price, part of this will represent wages paid to the workers who helped to make it, part of the price may go towards paying the rent of the shop, part will represent the manufacturer's selling price, and the rest the profit of the shopkeeper; and we similarly break down the manufacturer's receipts, and those of the people who supplied him with materials or component parts.

If people spend all of their incomes, it follows that they will just be able to purchase all the goods that have been produced. In practice, of course, people save part of their incomes, and if nothing happens to offset this saving part of output is left unsold. In practice, this tendency to save is mainly offset by investment by businessmen. Part of output is, in fact, the production of new equipment which is intended to increase future production. If the amount that people want to save is just equal to the amount that businessmen want to invest, the economy is stable. Keynes showed, however, that this stability might occur with a substantial level of unemployment. The decision of businessmen about how much investment would take place was the critical one.

People were free to decide how much they would save *out of a given income*, but the investment expenditure would always generate enough income to bring forth an equivalent amount of saving.

If, for example, people wanted to save one fifth of their incomes, and businessmen in the depression years of the 'thirties had wanted to spend an extra £1 million on investment, this would lead to an increase in incomes of £5 millions, of which £1 million would be saved. Initially, the £1 million creates extra incomes for those making capital goods. This extra income will be spent (largely by people who would otherwise have been unemployed) on consumer goods to the extent of £800,000. This creates an extra £800,000 of income for people working in the consumer goods industries, and they spend another £640,000, and so on. If the reader cares to continue the process he will see that after a time, the total extra income is approaching £5 million of which, by our assumption, £1 million is saved.

If there is unemployment, there are various ways the government can overcome the situation. It can encourage more investment by lowering interest rates or offering some other inducement, or it can try to reduce the tendency to save. The smaller the amount saved out of any given income, the higher the level of income associated with a given amount of investment. If, for example, people saved half of any additional incomes, a little simple arithmetic will show that an extra £1 million of investment will only lead to a total increase in incomes of £2 million, instead of £5 million when only one fifth of income was saved. It may not be very easy to persuade people to save less out of a given income, and the government may therefore decide to run a budget deficit. This leaves people with a bigger net income available after tax, and while they may save part of it, some at least will be spent and will have a 'multiplier' effect just like investment expenditure.

In the 'thirties, the pressing problem was unemployment. Since the war, it has been inflation. We have had more or less full employment all the time, and the combined pressure

of ordinary consumption expenditure, private investment, and government spending has been to create a total demand which is in excess of the productive capacity of the economy when fully employed. The task of the government has therefore been to cut down expenditure. From time to time there have been cuts in government spending, or at least a slowing down in the rate of increase, private investment has been curtailed, and a budget surplus has been used to mop up the excess purchasing power in the hands of private consumers. These are the opposite of the measures that are appropriate in time of depression. Again, little has been done to encourage private saving, because it is by no means easy to devise methods that will be sure to work on a sufficient scale. We know too little about the motives which govern savings to be able to rely upon such a technique for controlling the economy.

Redistribution of Income

Taxation may be used to bring about a redistribution of income. This may take several forms. One might expect steeply progressive death duties to lead to a reduction in some of the initial inequalities of income from property. In practice, this result has not been very significant, and in any case the result is slow.

Secondly, there is a clear redistribution of income from those paying taxes to those members of the community who are in need and drawing Supplementary Pensions and Allowances (what was formerly National Assistance).

Thirdly, there is the so-called redistribution of income that is involved in levying heavier taxes on the wealthier members of society in return for the same benefits from the state as those paying lower taxes.

Some measure of redistribution is required, but in practice it may be extremely difficult to strike a correct balance between ability to pay (giving due consideration to both income and family responsibilities), maintaining incentives, and other objectives.

What Kind of Taxes?

Whatever the reason for the government needing to levy taxation, there arises the further problem of ensuring that the tax system is both fair and efficient. Fairness means that a proper relationship must be established between a person's ability to pay and the taxes levied upon him, and may also call for a proper relationship between taxation levied and benefits received. A tax system must be efficient in two senses. There must not be undue difficulty in collection: it would clearly be wasteful to employ a large number of staff solely to collect a particular tax that had a very small yield. It might, therefore, be more efficient in a certain situation to raise the rates at which one tax is levied than introduce a new tax. It would involve little or no additional staff or expense to raise the duties on whisky and cigarettes, and provided the yield was not reduced by falling consumption, this might be more efficient than introducing indirect taxes on a wider range of commodities, since the latter course would call for additional staff to be employed. On the other hand, there are several factors that would have to be watched. There is the qualification already made that beyond a certain raising the rates of tax may be self-defeating because consumption falls so much that the yield is not significantly increased and may even fall. In addition, one has to ask whether it is right to continue levying higher and higher rates of tax upon persons addicted to one form of consumption expenditure rather than another.

A tax system must also be efficient in the sense that it does not have harmful effects on the economy. In this direction, it is sometimes alleged that income taxes discourage people from working; that both the taxation of income and the levying of death duties discourage saving. In addition, indirect taxes may have price effects which may be harmful or advantageous. There is a suspicion that Selective Employment Tax may raise prices in essential services like distribution: on the other hand, purchase tax has been raised on cars with a view to increasing the home market price in order to

reduce sales and free production for export. The efficiency of a tax system is therefore no simple matter.

Ability to Pay

Ability to pay is again a complex matter. Today, most people would agree that the amount of tax a person pays ought to be related *in some way* to the income he receives. But in what way? It is not enough to say that taxation should be proportional to income. A man earning £10 a week may barely be able to support himself and his wife, let alone pay taxes. It would be quite unfair, therefore, to ask him to pay ten per cent of his income in tax and likewise take ten per cent from the man earning £5,000 a year. The former would be asked to forgo part of the bare necessities of life whilst the latter would be paying only a tenth of an income that gave a considerable excess over such necessities. Taxes in most countries therefore tend to be progressive, that is to take a larger proportion of larger incomes: but there can be considerable disagreement over the appropriate *degree* of progression.

In addition, ability to pay must take account of necessary outgoings as well as income. The single man with £10 a week may be as well off as a married man with three children earning £15 a week. Moreover, the position may be complicated by the fact that the state itself may provide incomes, for example, in the form of family allowances, to people in need or in certain specified circumstances.

The Series

The question of taxation is therefore a big one. There are many aspects which need to be examined, before it is possible to decide what kind of reforms are needed in our present system. I hope in a number of articles over the coming months to examine some of the problems which have been posed above.

A friend of mine has become a food-faddist, and talks about "christian bread" and "christian cabbage". Is it worthwhile opposing such extravagant nonsense? Is the theology of sin at present undergoing radical change? Why has the practice of Yoga taken so widely in this country? What has the Church to say about Poltergeists?

Any Questions ?

WILLIAM LAWSON, S.J.

A friend of mine has become a food-faddist, and talks about "christian bread" and "christian cabbage". Is it worthwhile opposing such extravagant nonsense?

Are you sure it is nonsense? Over twenty years ago Sir Edward Mellanby showed that a diet of an ordinary kind of bread caused hysteria in dogs. Perhaps your friend is stating facetiously a principle enunciated by Romano Guardini. He says: "Justice consists in recognising and respecting the nature of every being, and the order that derives therefrom." We are bidden by the second commandment to reverence the name, that is, the nature of God. The command includes reverence for God's creation — all the natures that He made, human nature above all. We fail in that duty, not recognising natures or not respecting them, and making chaos out of order. When man no longer admits a duty to God, he quickly neglects his duty to created beings, although his peace and even his survival depend on the right functioning of everything. Of the four elements — earth, water, air, fire — the first three have been so grossly misused that human life has been put in danger. A short time ago there was a report of

babies dying in Sweden from drinking tap water supposed to be pure; the air in most cities is polluted — in certain weather conditions it is lethal for the bronchitic; and countless square miles of land are poisoned. Food, one of the necessities of life, can be robbed of much of its power to support life — *life*, not just existence. I once read a newspaper article entitled "Abuse your loaf" which began: "Bread, the staff of life, is perhaps the food against which most crimes are committed in this country". If your experience shows you the truth of that statement, and if you have ever had tea in Ireland with several kinds of bread, all of them good, you won't object to some bread being called "christian".

Is the theology of sin at present undergoing radical change?

No.

There are two separate "theologies of sin". The first concerns the history of mankind, and is a part of dogmatic theology; the second, which is a part of moral theology, concerns the history of the individual human being. Neither is undergoing radical change.

The central fact in the doctrine of sin is the Incarnation of the Word of God. It is also the central fact of history. At the beginning of the human race sin came upon the earth and was, with the devil who was involved in it from the start, an inescapable corrupting influence. Christ came to stop the corruption, to dismiss the devil from his lordship, and to overcome death. Sin, devil and death are defeated, and man can share in the triumph over them by dying and rising with Christ. He still has to share the fight, but in Christ his victory is assured. That is the knowledge we have by faith, and it does not change.

The moral question of what sin is objectively has been clearly answered in the teaching of Christ and the Church — it is the refusal to love God and to show that love by keeping His commandments, those being according to man's nature, and requiring him to be what God made him to be. There remain unanswered questions about sin in the subject. How

conscious must man be of his relationship with God before he can destroy his whole future by a wicked act? Are lethal sins as frequent as they were once supposed to be? Is a clear intention to reject God a necessary condition of the severing of man's bond with Him by which he is kept supernaturally alive? Psychology has much good to say in answer; but man's sensitiveness to sin, for his safety, should be not blunted but sharpened.

Why has the practice of Yoga taken on so widely in this country?

I can only guess from what I know of yoga and of this country. Like most of what is called "western civilisation" we are suffering from the severing of man's bond with God and from the consequent transformation of our theocentric universe into a system which is anthropocentric — man is the master of everything that is, and he is the measure of all things. Nothing is true that he does not understand, nothing exists that he cannot reach with his senses. He is his own God.

To be shut in and limited by space and time is more than a reflective man can stand. The spirituality and immortality of his being must produce a restlessness when the eternal is denied, and a dissatisfaction with what is material and perishable. The Christian lives by faith in God. Those who, looking for an escape from matter and not finding it in Christianity, become aware of the Hindu system of Yoga, may well feel that their hope lies in learning from an expert how to find union with the infinite and universal spirit. Charlatans exist who will take their money and deceive them; but there are masters of meditation whose instruction could be invaluable. For the Christian there are other Christians, trained in the methods of yoga, who can give instruction within Christian orthodoxy. The emphasis of the system is on the schooling of body and mind so that the person can more easily enter into a loving contemplation of God.

Even at a natural level a course of yoga could be beneficial, like a spell at some health centre. The techniques of physical

relaxation, and of abstraction of the mind from trivial and troublesome thoughts, are worth learning in these days of nervous tension and unprofitable anxiety.

What has the Church to say about Poltergeists?

Nothing. The word "Poltergeist" means a spirit which makes a row or racket; but the name is given to disturbances the cause of which is not known. It is not the Church's business to investigate the strange happenings, and there are no certain conclusions on which she might be expected to pronounce.

The poltergeist phenomena, many of which have been investigated, are the violent shifting of furniture and crockery, and stones flying through the air, without visible agency. One of the best-known poltergeists disturbed the household of Samuel Wesley, the father of John, at Epworth where he was rector, in 1716-17. There being no human culprit, the disturbances were blamed on a "spirit"; but what sort of spirit? Not an angel. So noble a creature could not be considered the cause of the tiresome destructiveness of poltergeist manifestations. A devil? But would the prince of this world and his legions descend to the trivialities of furniture-removing and plate-throwing? An imp, then, or a hobgoblin? But are there such beings?

According to the findings of the Society for Psychical Research, it seems that poltergeist phenomena do not occur except in the presence of a particular person whose psychological abnormality is necessary as at least the occasion of the disturbances. That there are good influences operative in certain places is proved by many examples. Evil influences are also a fact in some localities. Some people seem to be able, by a special sensitiveness, by being somehow in tune with the place, to evoke them. Beyond that, the expert researchers will not go. When fraud has been excluded (and there is plenty of that as in some spiritualistic seances) it is an open question whether the honest residue is to be explained naturally or

preternaturally. The Church is not called upon to pass judgment.

**As "hope springs eternal in the human breast",
why should it count as a virtue and not just a
natural attitude?**

You are right in thinking of "the hope that springs eternal" as a natural attitude and nothing more. Our use of the same word for the virtue is confusing: we should have two words, something like the French *espoir* which can't mean the theological virtue and *espérance* which can.

I fear that the confusion has led to a depreciation of the virtue. It gets mixed up with the natural attitude, which is present without effort; and that may make us forget that the virtue, like any virtue, is not really ours until it has become a habit by frequent and conscious assertion. Hope, as an attitude, belongs to everybody from the universal human powerlessness in face of the future. We can plan for the future, following courses of study, taking examinations, choosing a career and a state of life, arranging football fixtures and fixing appointments; but we have no certainty of success, or of the weather or of public transport. We cannot be sure what tomorrow will bring, or even if there will be a tomorrow. So, like the rest of the world, we hope — and there need be no virtue in that.

There would be some virtue in our hope if it were in the Providence of God. But the theological virtue is much higher and much harder. Hope of any kind is always for a good we desire and can't secure with certainty by our own efforts. Theological hope is the desire for God and for union with Him in eternal life, a desire which has absolute priority over all other desires, and which operates here and now to put all those desires into proportion and to decide the course of our life. How is our hope in comparison with St. Paul's, who said: "O, to be dissolved and to be with Christ", or St. Augustine's, who said: "It's killing me that I can't die"?

BOOK REVIEW

Wanted: a Long Haul

No Exit from Vietnam by Robert Thompson; Chatto and Windus, 30s.; pp. 208.

The only thing about this book with which I find myself in disagreement is its title. The impression this conveys is ambiguous. A first glance at the title alone produces an immediate reaction to the effect that there *can* be no American exit from Vietnam. In other words, the Americans have to remain in Vietnam for the simple reason that they cannot now extricate themselves without unthinkable cost from the appalling mess created in that country by their own desperately faulty strategy. They are doomed to remain there, making an even greater mess than at present, because the cost of getting out now is worse even than the mess they are making. This was the impression conveyed to me by a first glance at the title of Sir Robert Thompson's book.

I am happy to say my first impression was quite wrong. What the title of Sir Robert's book is really saying is that there *must* be no exit from Vietnam. Exit, in other words, is possible in the physical sense. The Americans are not trapped in Vietnam. Nevertheless, they must not go. Were they to do so, the consequences would prove disastrous. This does not mean that they must stay on to fight the war by the same methods and with the same inflated numbers as now. To do this might well be to invite consequences as catastrophic in their own fashion as those brought by evacuation straightaway from Vietnam. The right policy is for the Americans to stay to fight the war — or, better, communist insurgency — in Vietnam with methods completely revised because made to accord with a new, completely revised and appropriate policy and strategy. The two hundred and eight pages of Sir Robert Thompson's

really brilliant book can be taken as evidence of the truth of this proposition. Suffice it to say that he proves his point completely. Readers of his previous volume, *Defeating Communist Insurgency*, will not be surprised at this. Sir Robert is, I would say, without equal in this field. His assessment of the consequence of an American withdrawal from Vietnam—what he rightly calls a “sell-out”—needs, therefore, to be the more carefully weighed. They are best described in his own words:

“In South Vietnam itself a people would go under. Judging from past experience in China and North Vietnam perhaps several hundred thousands, who have supported the war and fought valiantly and who would certainly oppose the conquerors subsequent collectivisation programme, might be slaughtered. This will not be shown on television and so may not worry subverted liberals and fellow travellers, but others may have it on their conscience. There is, after all, no Formosa to which victims can escape nor has any area been set aside for them in the California desert. In a year or two they will be conveniently forgotten, while the victor is applauded for his acts of expropriation and the consequent stagnation of the economy is advanced as a specious argument for international aid.

“There are too many who will see through a camouflaged sell-out and who will object, notably in the United States itself . . . there cannot fail to be recriminations, not confined only to the powerful military lobby. This on top of America’s inevitable loss of confidence in herself could be more damaging to American unity in the next few years than all the dissent of the past few years and seriously weaken the United States’ position as leader of the West. After ‘We will stand in Vietnam’ every other American commitment will be exposed to doubt and anxiety on the part of those in whose favour it was made. There will be a tendency on the part of the United States either to retreat towards isolationism or to reconfirm

such commitments with added protestations of support . . . The former would stimulate the 'domino theory' while the latter could pave the way for more Vietnams.

"The 'domino theory' will in any case begin to operate not necessarily, as I have explained, with an immediate outbreak of fresh insurgencies, but rather with drastic realignments of policy certainly in South East Asia, probably in Africa and possibly even in Latin America. With the failure of western methods of defence in Vietnam, all western methods will be downgraded even in the political, economic and technical fields. The development of freedom and democracy, through plural economic and political societies and the concept of free enterprise, will cease to be attractive because they will appear to render States vulnerable to subversive attack. The great majority of the countries concerned are all basically agricultural ('the countryside of the world') where millions are acutely anxious less about their form of government than about where the next bowl of rice or maize is coming from. If the industrial countries of the West led by the United States ('the cities of the world') fail or, because of Vietnam, default on their obligation to remedy this situation and to close the widening gap between the rich and poor nations of the world, then these so called 'newly emerging forces' will be in great danger of becoming the starving masses. It is hard to think of a more explosive situation looming ahead than that a large part of the world, with its backward agriculture and expanding population, may become both communist controlled and starving.

"In the atmosphere of turbulence and distrust which would inevitably follow an American defeat in Vietnam, the risk of a third world war would increase. With the United States discredited and the British withdrawing from east of Suez, the Russian penetration of the Indian Ocean would gather momentum and effect. It would also be folly to assume that China would not be looking

for further easy pickings and a spread of influence with a united Vietnam as one of her instruments. In the circumstances which would prevail in Asia alone there are at least three countries which, within the next decade, would have to consider going nuclear — India, Japan and eventually Australia. Added to all this there is the danger that, with communist power no longer monolithic but polycentric, with the turmoil of the cultural revolution in China and with the cracks in the eastern bloc revealed by the occupation of Czechoslovakia, a defeat in Vietnam which tended to isolate the United States from her friends and allies could lead to a situation where the chances of miscalculation on all sides would be greatly increased."

It is the virtual certainty represented by these words that makes one so angry with liberals in this country and the United States who are clamouring now for an immediate recall of American troops from Vietnam. Equally infuriating are the students who parade the streets of American and European cities brandishing North Vietnamese flags and shouting slogans in favour of Ho Chi Minh. If these are capable of objective, concentrated reading, which I very much doubt, they would gain enormous profit from a study of this book. What irritates one so much is the false liberal identification of the South Vietnamese cause with the continued pursuit by the Americans of their present ill-considered, outsize and, in so many ways, outrageously stupid military policy in Vietnam. Given the certainty that this identification will persist in fact as well as in the liberal mind; that the Americans will not change their methods, then, indeed, it might be best for them to withdraw from Vietnam, dreadful though the results of such a withdrawal would be. One could argue soundly that the results of their staying and continuing to employ the same foolish military measures in the service of the same foolish policy as before, will be just as disastrous in the long run as those produced by a withdrawal itself.

I would be prepared to listen to this sort of argument, but

only on the assumption that there was no further choice in the shape of an alternative to either of these proposals. It is the whole merit of Sir Robert Thompson's book, that he presents this choice and shows clearly and unmistakably how it should be pursued and the results it will bring. The least one can ask of the liberal is that he should shed the foolish and false identification outlined above and think seriously and quietly on what Sir Robert has to propose. It is best given—more briefly this time—in his own words:

"It is, therefore, my view that now, more than at any time in the past decade, it is vital for the United States to keep its pledges and stand by South Vietnam. There is (must be) no exit and the new President does not really have much choice so far as policy is concerned. He does, however, have the opportunity to change the strategy. The American aim (in Vietnam) should be revised to read: 'To establish, at a cost acceptable to the United States, South Vietnam as a free, united and independent country which is politically stable and economically expanding! This does not require a defeat of the North but only *that its design to take over the South should be frustrated* (italics mine). To achieve the aim does, however, leave a long-haul, low-cost strategy as the only option."

In other words, not escalation, not masses of military hardware, not massive bombing; but patient, strategic work at ground level to frustrate Communist design. A long haul by brave patient men who know how to set resources at the service of effective strategy. This alone will win the day not only in Vietnam but elsewhere; anywhere in the developing world. The reader who wants to know more—what the whole entails—cannot do better than study this brilliant book.

Paul Crane, S.J.

READERS WRITE IN

(Another Batch)

Christian Order continues to sustain its high level of truth, topical interest, and clarity of thought in a somewhat confused Catholic atmosphere at present. We look forward to your further clarification of important Catholic truth in the next twelve months.—Luton, Beds.

I enjoy *Christian Order* very much — it is so sane and sensible.—Glasgow.

The magazine is an excellent one and deserves every encouragement for wider circulation.—Darlington.

A thousand thanks for a truly wonderful issue. *Christian Order* grows better and better.—Norfolk.

Your excellent little magazine *Christian Order* is both interesting and helpful in forming a correct opinion in these changing times.—Norway.

The April (1969) issue was so good.—London.

Christian Order is the very best magazine which comes my way. Sincere thanks and God bless you and your great work. I admire your fearlessness in calling a spade a spade.—Ireland.

Christian Order much appreciated. Many thanks.—Sussex.

Your Review, *Christian Order*, is highly appreciated by me and my students.—Malta.

Christian Order is more valuable than ever.—Ireland.

Your editorial helps to keep me sane.—London.

Well, there you are; and there are still more we could and probably will print. Someone actually asked whether I made these compliments up! I did not. They are perfectly genuine and they are unsolicited. They come in the letters that readers send me. From them I derive enormous encouragement. It is in the hope that you will do the same that they are printed here. If you have a friend who would like *Christian Order*, why not start him or her off with a subscription. Send £1 or \$3.00 to the Editor, 65 Belgrave Road, London, S.W. 1. We will do the rest.

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